

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2649

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0260

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID MARR PFOR SO UR US

SUBJECT: US AID FOR SOMALIA

1. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY: FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS POLICY ON AID TO SOMALIA HAS BEEN MADE FOR US BY THE LAW PREVENTING ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES WHOSE FLAG SHIPPING TRADES WITH NORTH VIET-NAM AND CUBA. NOW, HOWEVER, THE LAW HAS BEEN AMENDED TO GIVE THE PRESIDENT DISCRETION TO WAIVE THESE PROVISIONS "IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST". CONGRESSIONAL SPONSORS OF THIS AMENDMENT HAD SOMALIA SPECIFICALLY IN MIND. FURTHERMORE, GSDR HAS TOLD US THAT IT IS IN ANY CASE REMOVING SOMALI FLAG SHIPPING FROM NORTH VIET-NAM AND CUBAN TRADE. THUS DECISION ON FUTURE AID PROGRAM IS BEFORE US.

2. THIS TELEGRAM ARGUES FOR INITIATING A MODEST AID PROGRAM IN FOOD PRODUCTION FIELD ONCE GSDR HAS ACTUALLY COMPLETED ACTION ON SHIPPING. WE SUGGEST AID OFFICER COME TO MOGADISCIO AT THAT TIME TO DRAW UP RECOMMENDATIONS. WE EXPRESS HOPE THAT WE COULD SPEND ONE OR TWO MILLION DOLLARS FOR FOOD PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA IN FY 76.

END SUMMARY.

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3. BASIC FACT OF LIFE WE MUST KEEP IN MIND IS THAT GSDR EXTENDS SIGNIFICANT MILITARY FACILITIES TO THE USSR. WHILE GSDR CHAFES SOMEWHAT UNDER THE SOVIET RELATIONSHIP, WE BELIEVE RELATIONS WILL CONTINUE TO BE CLOSE FOR FORESEEABLE FUTURE. FURTHERMORE, WHILE GSDR IS NOT RPT NOT HOSTILE TO US, IT ADOPTS MANY EXTREME NON-ALIGNED POSTURES WHICH ARE AT VARIANCE WITH US POSITIONS.

4. WE MUST REMEMBER AT SAME TIME THAT SOMALIA IS ONE OF POOREST COUNTRIES AND ONE OF THOSE MOST SERIOUSLY AFFECTED BY CURRENT WORLD PRICE INCREASES. GSDR IS TRYING TO IMPROVE LOT OF ITS PEOPLE AND HAS REASONABLY EFFECTIVE MECHANISM FOR ASSURING THAT ASSISTANCE GETS WHERE IT BELONGS. SOMALIA GETS ONLY LIMITED ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE FROM ITS CLOSEST FRIENDS -- USSR, CHINA, THE ARAB STATES -- AND CONSIDERABLY MORE FROM MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING EUROPE'S FED, IBRD AND UNDP.

5. A PRINCIPAL ARGUMENT FOR AN AID PROGRAM IS SOMALIA'S EVIDENT NEED AND ITS ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY UTILIZE CERTAIN TYPES OF ASSISTANCE. AN AID PROGRAM WOULD ALSO REDUCE GSDR FEAR AND SUSPICION OF US AND INCREASE GSDR CONFIDENCE. THIS WOULD PROBABLY TEND TO STIFFEN GSDR RESISTANCE TO SOVIET DEMANDS FOR ADDITIONAL MILITARY FACILITIES AND PRIVILEGES. AID PROGRAM WOULD INCREASE RESERVOIR OF GOOD WILL TOWARD US AMONG POPULATION AND SECOND-LEVEL LEADERSHIP. THIS COULD BE IMPORTANT IF UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES SHOOK SOMALIA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH USSR AT SOME POINT IN FUTURE. FINALLY, CONCRETE RESPONSE TO GSDR'S SIGNIFICANT GESTURE ON FLAG SHIPPING QUESTION MIGHT ENCOURAGE FURTHER STEPS.

6. PRINCIPAL ARGUMENT AGAINST AN AID PROGRAM IS THAT US SHOULD NOT BE PAYING THE BILLS OF A GOVERNMENT WHICH IS NOT RPT NOT VERY FRIENDLY TOWARDS US AND WHICH IS GIVING USSR SUBSTANTIAL ASSISTANCE. FURTHERMORE, SOMALIA HAS IN PAST PROVED TO BE GRAVEYARD OF SEVERAL US AID PROJECTS, SOME OF WHICH ARE STILL SUBJECT OF SOMETIMES ACRIMONIOUS DISPUTE BETWEEN GSDR AND USG. FINALLY, SUBSTANTIAL US FUNDS ARE ALREADY FLOWING TOWARD SOMALIA THROUGH IBRD AND UNDP.

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7. POINTS IN PRECEDING PARAGRAPH, PLUS THE GENERAL SHORTAGE OF FUNDS FOR US OVERSEAS ASSISTANCE, SEEM TO US TO ARGUE PERSUASIVELY AGAINST ANY LARGE-SCALE US AID PROGRAM. HOWEVER, THE ADVANTAGES TO AN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM OUTLINED IN PARA. 5 SEEM SUFFICIENT TO MAKE A MODEST AID PROGRAM APPROPRIATE AND DESIRABLE. IF SO, THERE ARE PERSUASIVE REASONS -- SOMALIA'S NEED AND THE DESIRABILITY OF RESPONDING TO THEIR FLAG SHIPPING INITIATIVE -- FOR MOVING EXPEDITIOUSLY.

8. IT APPEARS TO US THAT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SHOULD BE CONCENTRATED IN FOOD PRODUCTION FIELD, DRAWING ON SOMALI PENCHANT FOR SELF-HELP TO EXTENT POSSIBLE. NOW THAT RELIEF STAGE OF DROUGHT ASSISTANCE IS PRETTY WELL UNDER CONTROL, THIS IS THE AREA OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO GSDR. IT CORRESPONDS TO CURRENT US CONGRESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES. IT BUILDS ON US PRE-1969 EXPERIENCE HERE.

9. GSDR OFFICIALS IN RECENT WEEKS HAVE STRESSED TO US THEIR NEED FOR ASSISTANCE IN RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR DROUGHT REFUGEES WHOM THEY PLAN TO MOVE TO MOUNTAIN SLOPES IN NORTH AND RIVER VALLEYS IN SOUTH. FOR FORMER, THEY HAVE EMPHASIZED NEED FOR A FEW EXPERTS IN HYDROLOGY AND FOR EARTH MOVING EQUIPMENT TO BUILD DIKES AND CATCHMENT BASINS. FOR LATTER, THEY HAVE STRESSED NEED FOR IRRIGATION PUMPS AND AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY. UNDP IS WORKING IN THESE FIELDS AND IN RANGE MANAGEMENT. IT HAS CONSIDERABLE KNOWLEDGE OF SOMALIA'S NEEDS AND CAPABILITIES IN THESE AND OTHER FOOD PRODUCTION FIELDS.

10. WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT, ONCE GSDR HAS ACTUALLY EFFECTED ITS CANCELLATION OF SOMALI FLAG SHIP REGISTRATION, AND ASSUMING PROBLEM OF OUTSTANDING SOMALI DEBTS ON PREVIOUS LEASES CAN BE RESOLVED, AID OFFICER FROM NAIROBI OR WASHINGTON COME TO MOGADISCIO TO TALK WITH EMBASSY, UNDP AND GSDR. HE SHOULD THEN DRAW UP RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO A MODEST FOOD PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, WITH NUMBER OF US EXPERTS KEPT TO MINIMUM. WE WOULD HOPE THAT ONE OR TWO MILLION DOLLARS COULD BE SPENT WISELY AND PRODUCTIVELY FOR SOMALIA IN THIS FIELD IN FY 76.  
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